

CORLEY et al.

Serial No.: 09/647,711

Request for Reconsideration dated June 8, 2007

Response to Office Action dated January 12, 2007

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14 are pending in the present application. Favorable reconsideration of the application in view of the remarks set forth herein is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 5-8 and 11-12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McComb et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,224, hereinafter “McComb”) in view of Culliss (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2003/0187837 A1) is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action acknowledges that there is no teaching or suggestion in McComb of the feature of *a search tool operable to receive a user constructed database query and search the query store for a previously constructed query that resembles said user constructed database query*. It is respectfully submitted that the claimed feature of “selecting between the user constructed query and a previously constructed database query resembling the user constructed query *located by the search tool*” likewise cannot be disclosed by McComb (i.e., if there is no teaching or suggestion of the search tool, how can there be a selection between items where one of the items is identified or selected by a search tool?). The Office Action now cites Culliss as allegedly overcoming the deficiencies of McComb. It is respectfully submitted that Culliss fails to overcome the

CORLEY et al.

Serial No.: 09/647,711

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fundamental deficiencies of McComb, and thus the combination fails to render the claims obvious.

In particular, the claimed invention specifically recites that the query submission means selects between the user constructed query and the previously constructed query located by the search tool, and then submitting the selected query to the database. There is no teaching or suggestion in Culliss of the claimed feature of “selecting” between a user constructed database query and a previously constructed query located by the search tool.

In one instance, according to Culliss, the user may be presented with or suggested to use queries that may use related key terms or that contain the original query or portions thereof. The system may also identify other narrower related queries (see, e.g., paragraphs [0060] – [0066]). However, there is no teaching or suggestion of the feature of selecting, by the system, between these alternative queries and the user constructed query. In another instance, Culliss teaches displaying results for both the user constructed query and alternative narrower queries (see, e.g., paragraphs [0068] – [0072]). However, this is not a selection between the different alternative queries, but merely a ranked display of the results obtained by all queries. This is the opposite of selection. There is no selection whatsoever performed by the system of Culliss. Therefore, Culliss does not

CORLEY et al.

Serial No.: 09/647,711

Request for Reconsideration dated June 8, 2007

Response to Office Action dated January 12, 2007

provide the claimed query submission means, and thus cannot render the claimed invention obvious.

Instead, Culliss is directed to a method of organizing information in which the search activity of previous users is monitored and such activity is used to organize articles for future users. Personal data about future users can be used to provide different article rankings depending on the search activity and personal data of the previous users. According to Culliss (see, e.g., Fig. 1), a first search query from a first user identifies certain articles, which are then presented to the first user. Based on various actions, for example, the selection of articles made by the first user, an index that ranks the relevancy of certain articles is updated to reflect the selections made by the first user. When the same query is received from a second user, the articles are presented to the second user in an order based on the ranking of the articles based on access by previous users. The bulk of the Culliss disclosure is directed to the manner in which the indexing, ranking and/or narrowing of search results is accomplished, not any selection by the system between a user constructed database query and a previously constructed query resembling the user constructed query identified by a search tool. There is simply no teaching or suggestion of the claimed selection feature in Culliss.

CORLEY et al.

Serial No.: 09/647,711

Request for Reconsideration dated June 8, 2007

Response to Office Action dated January 12, 2007

In complete contrast, Culliss is directed to an indexing tool for presenting search results in order of relevancy to a user. While the indexing tool disclosed by Culliss may use a number of similar database queries and personal data characteristics to index search results, it does not disclose or suggest anywhere, the feature of selecting between a user constructed query and one located by a search tool. In short, Culliss is directed to a tool for indexing search results, *not* to selecting between alternative database queries. Quite to the contrary, instead of selecting between queries, Culliss teaches displaying results for all similar queries. Using all queries is the antithesis of selecting between queries. Even those paragraphs cited in the Office Action bear this out.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Culliss fails to overcome the fundamental admitted and other deficiencies noted above with respect to McComb. Therefore, even if, *arguendo*, the combination of McComb and Culliss were proper, the combination nevertheless fails to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 3, 4, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McComb in view of Culliss and further in view of Malloy (U.S. Patent No. 5,787,234) is respectfully traversed.

CORLEY et al.

Serial No.: 09/647,711

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It is respectfully submitted that Malloy fails to overcome the fundamental deficiencies noted above with respect to McComb and Culliss. Therefore, even if, *arguendo*, the combination of McComb, Culliss and Malloy were proper, the combination nevertheless fails to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the entire application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further issues require resolution prior to allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney of record at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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